DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED BY SENATE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on Monday, January 7, 2008 at 7:00 pm in Room 3210 WMC

Open Session

Present: Easton, Stephen, Vice-Chair of Senate

Abdulwahab, Kamal
Atkins, Stella
Brebner, Sarah
Brennand, Tracy
Copeland, Lynn
Cormack, Lesley
Dagenais, Diane
Dickinson, Peter
Driver, Jon
Fox, Amy
Francis, June
Gençay, Ramo
Hannah, David
Harder, Derrick
Harding, Kevin
Krane, William
Laba, Martin
LaBrie, John
Lee, Benjamin
Letourneau, Michael
Lewis, Brian
Li, Paul
Liljedahl, Peter
Malcoe, Lorraine Halinka
O'Neil, John
Paling, Joe
Percival, Colin
Percival, Paul
Peters, Joseph
Pinto, Mario
Plischke, Michael
Popadiuk, Natalee
Russell, Robert
Shaker, Paul
Shapiro, Daniel
Thompson, Steve
Tiffany, Evan
Tse, Karen
Vaid, Bhuvinder
van Baarsen, Amanda
Wakkary, Ron
Waterhouse, John
Williams, Peter

Ross, Kate, Registrar and Senior Director Student Enrolment
Watt, Alison, Director, University Secretariat
Grant, Bobbie, Recording Secretary

Absent
Black, Sam
Corbett, Kitty
Fizzell, Maureen
Gordon, Robert
Hayes, Michael
Javed, Waseem
Lein, Adam
Louie, Brandt
McArthur, James
Shermer, Thomas
Smith, Don
Stevenson, Michael
Warner, D'Arcy
Weeks, Daniel
Williams, Tony

In attendance:
Angerilli, Nello
Friesen, Jane
Hatala, Marek
Heift, Trude
Hinchliffe, Jo
Jones, Christine
Mellow, Dean
Wister, Andrew

1. Approval of the Agenda

The Vice-President, Academic suggested that Item 6.b.i be changed from a motion for approval to an item to be discussed in Committee of the Whole. Senate was advised that the suggestion follows from the significant amount of discussion that had occurred prior to the meeting on this issue. It was felt that it would be appropriate to have an open discussion to learn more about the concerns and issues and then perhaps gather further information as required, resulting in the motion being held over to another meeting.

The issue of timing was raised. Senate was advised that even if Senate made a decision at this meeting, it was probably too late to affect entry to the university in September 2008. If the admission requirements were changed by late Spring 2008, that would allow sufficient time to prepare recruiting materials for September 2009 admissions.

There were no objections to the change, and the agenda was approved as amended.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session of December 3, 2007

The Minutes were approved as distributed.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

4. Report of the Chair

The Chair welcomed Senator Daniel Shapiro attending his first meeting as Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration. There was no further report from the Chair.

5. Question Period

There were no questions.

6. Reports of Committees

A) Senate Committee on University Priorities

i) Paper S.08-1 – Centre for Education Research and Policy

Moved by J. Waterhouse, seconded on R. Gençay

> "that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the creation of the Centre for Education Research and Policy (CERP) as a Schedule B Centre"

J. Friesen, Department of Economics, was in attendance to respond to questions.

A small editorial correction was noted to point 2.3 under Governance.

In response to concerns that the Steering Committee appeared to favour representation from the Department of Economics, it was pointed out that the committee was composed

to reflect representation from all areas associated with the Centre. Although several members were from Economics, they actually represented areas outside of the Economics Department and each brought a particular expertise to the project.

Question was called, and a vote taken. MOTION CARRIED

ii) Paper S.08-2 – David Lam Centre – Revised Terms of Reference

Moved by J. Waterhouse, seconded by L. Cormack

> "that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the revised Terms of Reference for the David Lam Centre, in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences"

Concern was expressed about the lack of information on membership for the Centre. Senate was advised that this Centre had been operational without terms of reference for many years, and upon the retirement of its Director and members of the original Steering Committee, it was felt to be an appropriate time to put in place the terms of reference which are currently before Senate. Once the terms have been approved, the process of finding a new Director and organizing a Steering Committee will take place. An opinion was expressed that Senate should be assured that there was a reasonable set of qualified individuals interested in the Centre and it would be helpful to have a list of members before approval of the terms of reference. It was pointed out that the terms of reference explain how the Steering Committee will be developed.

Discussion turned to the proposal to move from a Schedule B Centre to a Schedule A Centre which would be housed in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. It was noted that the Centre had always operated largely as an interdisciplinary centre drawing quite widely from members outside of Arts and Social Sciences and a concern was expressed that changing from a Schedule B to a Schedule A Centre narrowed those interdisciplinary links. Senate was reminded that it was common for Schedule A Centres to have members from Faculties other than from the Faculty in which they are housed. An opinion was expressed that having more information around the membership would have provided a clearer understanding of the vision for the Centre in this regard.

Moved by P. Percival, seconded by M. Letourneau

> "that the motion be tabled until revised documentation is brought forward containing a proposed membership list for the David Lam Centre"

It was noted that proponents of a centre normally draw up the terms of reference outlining the proposed mandate. A membership list showing the expertise of the individual members helps to identify interest in a centre. Without that information, interest in the centre is hard to gauge. Senate was advised that this was a unique situation and without terms of reference it might be difficult to organize a steering committee.

In response it was noted that a new Centre was not being proposed, but an update of a Centre that has been in existence for many years. Its revised terms of reference have been drafted for its present and future direction. Furthermore, the lack of a membership listing was not seen as an impediment to this process.

Question was called on the motion to table, and a vote taken. MOTION TO TABLE FAILED

Question was called on the main motion, and a vote taken. MAIN MOTION CARRIED

iii) Paper S.08-3 – External Review – Department of Gerontology

Moved by J. Waterhouse, seconded by K. Harding

> "that Senate approve the recommendations from the Senate Committee on University Priorities concerning advice to the Department of Gerontology and the Dean of Arts and Social Sciences on priority items resulting from the External Review"

A. Wister, Chair, Department of Gerontology, was in attendance to respond to questions.

Question was called, and a vote taken. MOTION CARRIED

iv) Paper S.08-4 – Joint Major in Communication and Interactive Arts and Technology

Moved by J. Waterhouse, seconded by K. Harding

> "that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the proposal for a Joint Major in Communication and Interactive Arts and Technology in the Faculty of Applied Sciences"

M. Hatala, School of Interactive Arts and Technology, was in attendance to respond to questions.

In response to a question about the impact of Faculty restructuring on this program, it was noted there several joint major programs already exist in units that cross Faculty boundaries, and the current restructuring proposal would see the two schools in the same Faculty, so restructuring would not have any impact. A question arose as to whether students in this program would qualify for the DTO program. Senate was advised that students choosing a concentration in Informatics might qualify for this program.

Question was called, and a vote taken. MOTION CARRIED

v) Paper S.08-5 – Joint Major in First Nations Studies and Linguistics

Moved by J. Waterhouse, seconded by R. Russell
"that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the proposal for a BA in First Nations Studies and Linguistics (Joint Major), in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences"

D. Mellow, Department of Linguistics, was in attendance to respond to questions.

Question was called, and a vote taken. MOTION CARRIED

vi) Paper S.08-6 – Certificate in German Studies

Moved by J. Waterhouse, seconded by B. Vaid
"that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the proposal for a Certificate in German Studies, in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences"

T. Heift, Department of Linguistics, was in attendance to respond to questions.

Question was called, and a vote taken. MOTION CARRIED

vii) Paper S.08-7 – Certificate in Religious Studies

Moved by J. Waterhouse, seconded by J. Paling
"that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the proposal for a Certificate in Religious Studies, in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences"

C. Jones, Department of Humanities, was in attendance to respond to questions.

Question was called, and a vote taken. MOTION CARRIED

viii) Paper S.08-8 – SFU Class/Exam Schedule for the 2010 Olympics

Motion #1
Moved by J. Waterhouse, seconded by J. Paling

"that Senate approve the proposed Class/Exam Schedule for the 2010 Olympics"

[The schedule should have referenced the Olympics break as **February** 15-26, 2010.]

Question was called, and a vote taken. MOTION CARRIED

Motion #2

Moved by J. Waterhouse, seconded by S. Brebner

> "that Senate requests the Calendar Committee conduct an assessment of the feasibility of extending the annual Reading Break to a full week on a regular basis"

In response to an inquiry as to why it Senate's vote was required, rather than having the committee decide on its own to conduct an assessment, it was noted that approval of the motion by Senate would encourage the committee to review this issue.

Question was called, and a vote taken. MOTION CARRIED

ix) Paper S.08-9 – Centres and Institutes Report 2006/2007 (For Information)

A question was raised about what action was taken against centres and institutes that failed to provide a financial report. Senate was advised that since the majority of units receive no financial support from the University, leniency was shown in demanding financial reports. It was noted that two centres that had received funding had not submitted financial reports; the Vice-President Research advised that he would look into this. It was also mentioned that the Faculty Restructuring Task Force has made specific recommendations concerning the operation of centres and institutes and there was no intent to take further action until the recommendations were discussed and/or finalized.

It was noted that page 4 indicates that the Centre for Coastal Studies was active, yet no description of the Centre appeared in documentation (pages 10-11). The Vice-President Research confirmed that this was an oversight in the document.

Brief discussion ensued with respect to the basis for defining a centre as being 'active' versus 'inactive'. Senate was advised that as long as the proponents of a centre can cite 'minimal activity' such as seminars, colloquia, etc the centre is considered active but the intent is to have greater stringency in the assessment process in the future but to do this, the current policy would have to be modified.

B) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies

i) Paper S.08-10 – Change to Admission Requirements with regard to BC Provincial Grade 12 Examinations (For Information)

N. Angerilli, Associate Vice-President, Students and International, K. Ross, Registrar and Senior Director, Student Enrolment, and J. Hinchliffe, Assistant Registrar, were in attendance to respond to questions.

Senators were reminded that Senate had approved a change in the agenda to allow discussion of this item in Committee of the Whole, with formal consideration of the motion being held over to another meeting. The Chair suggested that a one hour time limit be considered for the discussion.

Moved by M. Letourneau, seconded by J. Paling

> "that Senate move into a Committee of the Whole for a period of one hour to discuss this item"

Question was called, and a vote taken. MOTION CARRIED

At the outset, B. Krane provided Senate with background on this item. Senate was advised that the University of Victoria had approved this measure, while the University of British Columbia, after a split vote, defeated a similar motion and decided to study the issue further and report back to its Senate. One of the reasons for bringing this issue forward at SFU was to provide prospective students with greater certainty regarding their admission and scholarship applications. Secondly, it was proposed so that different categories of students (direct entry from high school, transfer, and out of province) would be treated on a more equitable basis. Thirdly, it was felt that since admission offers were mostly based on self-reporting and interim grades, the provincial exam results have fairly limited utility in the current admission process, other than to revoke offers if the standards for admission are not met. Referring to the recent emails on this subject, the Associate Vice President Academic stated that they seemed to revolve around the quality of students and the need to protect the reputation of the University.

Many questions, concerns, comments, and suggestions were raised during the discussion of this issue.

- Firm offers of admission need to be made earlier. Many students get early offers of guaranteed admission from other universities (along with everything guaranteed from residence to parking) and an offer from SFU which is conditional, puts SFU at a disadvantage. Having to wait for provincial marks creates a level of uncertainty and stress for prospective students.
- It was suggested that the proposal would affect the reputation of the University. Some alumni had expressed concern that this change would result in the perception that SFU had lower standards than UBC, and SFU degrees would lose their value.
- In order to identify and try to deal with top students early, procedures have been adopted to prioritize and ensure that offers are made quickly to students with high averages. A written strategy for recruitment exists for international students and plans are underway to put together a recruitment plan to more effectively target top domestic students.
- Comments supporting or criticizing the use of the final exams for admissions decisions touched on grade inflation, gender bias in school vs. exam results, on-line courses, teaching to the exam and restricting flexibility in learning, standardized curricula, student preparation for university level work, the Ministry's/Government

support for exams, and the issue of differing processes in other jurisdictions. It was suggested that Provincial exams should not be eliminated without having some other means to measure high school students. Entrance exams were suggested, perhaps collaborative entrance exams with the other universities.

- A suggestion made about the possibility of considering provincial exams in English and Mathematics.

Data were requested on the following issues:

- Size of the population of top students entering university; percentage of top students attending SFU.
- The number of offers of admission or scholarship are revoked due to exam results
- The effect of applying the proposed change to last year's incoming students
- The correlation of high school provincial exams to university performance over the long term (20 years)
- The number of students who may have rejected one university over another because they wanted to make their university decision rather than waiting until August for a confirmed offer.
- Evidence that students would not come to SFU if provincial exams remain an admissions factor.
- Evidence of gender bias in school versus exam results

In response to a question as to the process moving forward, the Chair stated that clearly further data were needed and the proponents of the motion would need to consider the suggestions and comments made by Senate, and provide whatever data is available to answer Senate's questions prior to this coming back to Senate for consideration.

Every Senator having had an opportunity to speak at least once, the Chair indicated that the time limit for discussion had expired. Senate recessed briefly for five minutes. Following the recess, Senate moved out of Committee of the Whole before continuing with the remainder of the agenda.

ii) Paper S.08-11 – BC Adult Graduation Diploma (BCAGD) Admission Policy

Moved by B. Krane, seconded by K. Harding

> "that Senate approve the BC Adult Graduation Diploma (BCAGD) Admission Policy on a permanent basis"

Concerns were expressed about the small number of students involved in this credential, and a suggestion was made that it might be better to approve the policy again for another three years to see if participation increased.

An opinion was expressed that the overall performance of the students in this group was rather poor. A suggestion was made that it would be more appropriate for these students to go through the college system and transfer to SFU, and that this admission policy be discontinued.

Senators were reminded that SFU had a long tradition of providing alternate pathways into the university, and that this was another example of an alternate route. It was also noted that the performance, retention rate, and degree completion time for students in this group would likely look very similar to other students in the general student population if a random sample were taken. Senate was advised that the number of students admitted via this avenue would never be very large, but it would probably be possible to track them more effectively to ensure that they connect to the appropriate supports within SFU to assist their success and achieve their goal.

Question was called, and a vote taken. MOTION CARRIED

iii) Paper S.08-12 – Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Applied Sciences (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved a change in the admission GPA for the Minor in Computer and Electronics Design, in the School of Engineering Science.

iv) Paper S.08-13 – Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Business Administration (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved a prerequisite change for an existing course, and a change in statement about maintenance CGPA.

v) Paper S.08-14 – Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Education (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved a new course, and minor changes to existing courses and program requirements.

vi) Paper S.08-15 – Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Science (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved minor changes to existing courses and program requirements, and a new Honors option to the Joint Major between Computing Science and Molecular Biology and Biochemistry.A question was raised about why the new joint honors program wasn't before Senate for approval. *Secretary's note: This item should have been on the agenda for approval and will be coming forward to the February 2008 meeting of Senate.*

vii) Paper S.08-16 – Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved seven new courses and minor changes to existing courses and program requirements in the School for the Contemporary Arts.

C) Senate Nominating Committee

i) Paper S.08-17– Elections

Senate was advised that no further nominations had been received. Benjamin Lee was therefore elected by acclamation to the Undergraduate Student position on the Senate Committee on International Activities (SCIA), and Dongya Yang was elected by acclamation to the faculty position representing the Faculty of Arts and Sciences on the International Student Exchange Committee (ISEC) (not the Faculty from Applied Sciences as incorrectly indicated on the agenda paper).

The remaining vacancies for the International Student Exchange Committee (ISEC) will be carried forward to the next meeting.

7. Other Business

i) Paper S.08-18 – Policy GP 38 – Sustainability (For Information)

Questions arose with respect to the definition of sustainability versus environmental sustainability, and the necessity and meaning of the first sentence in Section 3.0.1. The Secretary of Senate indicated that these questions would be referred to the appropriate office.

8. Information
The date of the next regularly scheduled meeting of Senate is Monday, February 4, 2008.

The Open Session adjourned at 9:25 pm, and Senate moved directly into Closed Session.

Alison Watt
Director, University Secretariat